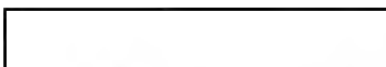


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Acting Chief, Research
and Validation

6 May 1953

Chief, Basic Training Division

Comments on Proposed Training Evaluation Form

1. For what they may be worth, I would like to make a few comments on the new proposed Training Evaluation Form.

2. Suitability of Form

It seems to me that the proposed form is not very practicable for a typist. It is assumed that the evaluation would have to be prepared in more than one copy. This means that the carbon would have to be inserted several times, and if a typist had to work on both sides of the sheet, she would have to put in carbons, take them out, turn the pages over, put the carbons back in, and so forth.

Also, it is noted that many of the spaces provided are quite small. Past experience has shown that perfect registration is not always obtained and that an x on the original may not necessarily appear in the same box on the third carbon. This leads to a waste of time, extra checking and typing. A more practical form would be on one side of the page only, with all boxes and spaces quite large.

3. Introduction

The introduction states that the evaluation should not be used as a major basis for action. If there is any validity to the evaluation, it is not clear to me why it should not be so used. It is noted that the introduction states that the evaluation is without regard to position, grade, or length of service in the Agency. This is in contradiction to Section 6 which is in terms of a person's age, grade, and experience in the Agency.

4. Section 1

It is stated that A/E will secure this information from the Registrar. However, the Registrar does not have the date of birth or EOD dates of students and if such information is to be obtained, the green sheets (Training Request Forms) should be revised to include this information. However, EOD dates, except for new employees, are quite difficult to obtain. For instance, the records of my own EOD date show the date when I went on unvouchered funds, which is several years later than the date I actually entered the Agency. ✓

I do not believe that the number of absences is a significant item. What the student misses is more significant than the number of days he misses.

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In one case, a student who misses two days of work may not suffer at all, because he is already familiar with the material missed or it is not particularly significant; and in another case, two days' absence might make it impossible for the student to go on with the course. I am of the opinion that where the absence is significant, comments in Section 7 would be sufficient, as well as more useful.

5. Section 2

I like this section and am of the opinion that it more or less eliminates the necessity for Section 5.

6. Section 3

I am opposed to the use of centile standings on this form. I do not believe that most of the customers will understand centiles or will be able to interpret their significance. There will be apparent discrepancies from time to time between the centile standings and the instructors' ratings and these discrepancies will lead to confusion and many requests for clarification. If centile standings are to be used on the form, then at least there must be a clear definition on the form of what is meant by centile.

I am also opposed to an over-all academic evaluation. The relative importance of each subject is difficult to determine, and will vary from individual to individual. If, for example, a student received marks in Map Reading and in Communism, the two could undoubtedly be averaged to arrive at an over-all mark. However, for one individual's assignment, Map Reading would be irrelevant; for the other student's assignment, Communism would be irrelevant. The instructors, in assigning a particular weight to an individual subject, may mislead the customer by the resulting over-all evaluation because the customer would not assign that weight to a particular element in terms of a particular assignment.

It is noted that the instructions call for a calibration of the evaluation scale from class to class. I do not understand what this means. If it means that a student who misses 10 questions on a test in one class will receive a different adjectival rating than a student who misses 10 questions on the same test in another class, then I am opposed to it. I do not feel that students should receive ratings of excellent simply because they are at the top of a very poor class, or that they should receive low marks because they are at the bottom of a very good one.

7. Section 4

It seems to me that a more specific determination of what is meant by skills will have to be made. I object to the examples printed on the form. In reference to "Ability to Write Reports," the kind of report needs to be specified. Students who are skilled in writing intelligence reports may not do well on operational reports, finance reports, or monthly reports. If ability to write generally is being measured, this could be better done by standard tests which have been developed to measure this ability. "Facility of Oral Expression" seems definitely

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misplaced here, since this is a skill which we do not teach in any course, and it is not intended to be a specific outcome of any course. I am quite puzzled as to how a student will receive a centile rating on "Facility of Oral Expression." How can an instructor determine that a student has more oral facility than 7% of the class? And will this have any meaning to the customer?

8. Section 5

I do not understand this section at all. The instructions indicate that centile scores will be entered, but here also, I do not understand how attitudes and traits can be so scored. The use of red x's in this section will cause much additional work for the typist, since each copy will have to be marked individually. I am of the opinion that there are very few traits or attitudes that can be observed for all the members of a large class, or that are significant for all members. I do not feel that an adjectival rating of a trait or attitude will be meaningful to the customer, and suggest that this section be eliminated.

9. Section 6

Apparently the instructors are to make a judgment of the student's over-all performance, taking into account the student's age, grade, and experience. I do not know how the instructor is going to do this. As to age, the fact that a student is young will be an asset in some phases of his training and a liability in others. A student's GS rating is very difficult to take into account because our instructors have no real way to decide how a person should perform at a particular grade. Furthermore, GS ratings vary from one office to another, and less may be required of a GS-13 Station Chief in Panama than of a GS-9 Case Officer in Berlin in terms of actual responsibility. As for experience in the Agency, there seems to be no way for the instructor to know what this includes. The instructors' information comes from the Training Request Forms, which are often misleading and occasionally falsified.

Furthermore, it seems to me that the choice of one of seven statements to apply to an individual will be quite difficult since the level of the performance in all subjects may not be the same. Students frequently perform exceptionally well in some phases, poorly in others; in which case, the adjusted over-all evaluation does not apply, except with qualifications.

This section does not seem to be in harmony with the principle stated in the instructions, which is, that "only what can be observed or measured should be reported."

10. General

While open to conviction, I doubt that one form can be made to serve the purpose in all courses. I doubt also that any valid observation of traits and attitudes can be made except where an extensive "live" problem is used for that purpose.

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